

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are presented for further examination, with claims 1 and 11 being independent. Independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended and new claims 12 and 13 have been added. Support for new claim 12 can be found in the application as originally filed, for example, in Fig. 3. Support for new claim 13 can be found in the application as originally filed, for example, in paragraph [0024] on page 12. No new matter has been added.

The rejection of claims 1-11 over JP 10-022279 ("Fukuyama") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,663,715 ("Yuda") is respectfully traversed. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Amended independent claim 1 recites a plasma film forming apparatus comprising, *inter alia*, a plasma excitation gas supply port for supplying a plasma excitation gas at least from a ***lower side of a region on the high frequency wave supply unit side*** toward a central portion of the region on the high frequency wave supply unit side. Similarly, amended independent claim 11 recites a plasma film forming method comprising, *inter alia*, supplying a plasma excitation gas at least from a lateral side and a ***lower side of a plasma generation region*** to a central portion of the plasma generation region.

None of Yuda, Fukuyama, or the combination thereof discloses a plasma film forming apparatus comprising, *inter alia*, a plasma excitation gas supply port for supplying a plasma excitation gas at least from a ***lower side of a region on a high frequency wave supply unit side*** toward a central portion of the region on the high frequency wave supply unit side, as recited in independent claim 1. Similarly, none of Yuda, Fukuyama, or the combination thereof discloses a plasma film forming method comprising, *inter alia*, supplying a plasma excitation gas at least from a lateral side and a ***lower side of a plasma generation region*** to a central portion of the plasma generation region, as recited in independent claim 11.

Moreover, the plasma film forming apparatus of independent claim 1 comprises, *inter alia*, a flat-plate structure formed with an opening for allowing plasma generated in a region on a high frequency wave supply unit side to pass to a region on a mounting unit side. New claim 12 specifies that the opening is formed with high aperture ratio in the structure so as to allow plasma generated in the region on the high frequency wave supply unit side to pass to the region on the mounting unit side.

In contrast, Yuda discloses ***a plasma confining*** electrode (5) that has radial passage holes 13 for allowing radicals generated in a plasma generation region to pass to a substrate processing region. (Column 7, Line 61- Column 8, Line 19). The radical passage hole 13 is designed to have a diameter such that it is possible to confine the generated plasma efficiently. (Column 7, Lines 11-21). None of Yuda, Fukuyama, or the combination thereof discloses or suggests the plasma film forming apparatus of claim 12, comprising an opening formed with high aperture ratio in the structure so as to allow plasma generated in the region on the high frequency wave supply unit side to pass to the region on the mounting unit side.

New claim 13 specifies that the high frequency wave supply unit is a radial line slot antenna. None of Yuda, Fukuyama, or the combination thereof discloses or suggests the plasma film forming apparatus of claim 12, comprising a radial line slot antenna.

In view of the foregoing, the application is respectfully submitted to be in condition for allowance, and prompt favorable action thereon is earnestly solicited.

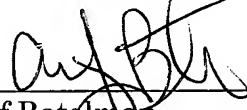
If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

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If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #101994.57726US).

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Respectfully submitted,

  
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